

Matthew Seymour

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Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

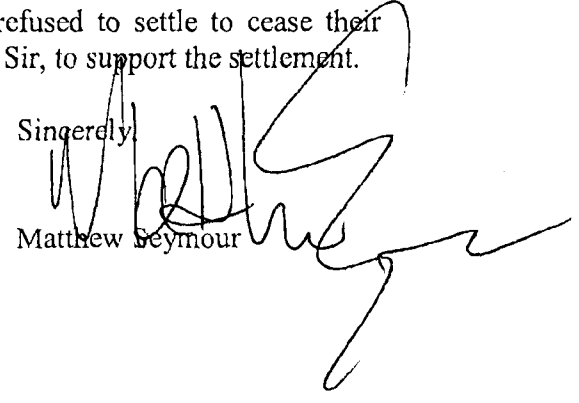
Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

Three years ago, Microsoft was found to be in violation of antitrust laws. The corporation was duly brought to trial in the Federal courts, and it was not until June of last year that a settlement even began to be negotiated. After six months of around-the-clock negotiation, Microsoft and the Department of Justice were finally able to reach a settlement, and finalization has been pending ever since. However, nine of the plaintiff states in the case are currently seeking to undermine the settlement and bring further litigation against the Microsoft Corporation. I do not believe this is either necessary or wise. The proposed settlement would not only prevent further antitrust violations and thereby negate the claims that Microsoft's opponents have against the corporation, it would also allow business within the technology industry to return to normal.

The settlement restricts various actions on the part of Microsoft and also requires them to make changes in the Windows operating system. For example, future versions of Windows will be reformatted in order to support non-Microsoft software. Additionally, Microsoft has agreed to refrain from entering into any contract that would require a third party to promote or sell Microsoft products either exclusively or at a fixed percentage. Microsoft has been extremely compliant in reaching this agreement, and the Justice Department has been fair to Microsoft in return. Microsoft will be allowed to remain intact, instead of being divided in thirds as was initially proposed. Microsoft has, in turn, agreed to terms under the settlement that extend to technologies and processes that were not determined to be unlawful by the Court of Appeals.

It is time for the nine states that have thus far refused to settle to cease their compliant(s) and to allow justice to be served. I urge you, Sir, to support the settlement.

Sincerely,


Matthew Seymour